

VZCZCXRO3835
PP RUEHTRO
DE RUEHTU #2963 3601429
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 261429Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2387
INFO RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 0828
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 7376
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1224
RUEHNK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY 0815
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1681
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 8286
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY 0020
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA PRIORITY 4033
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS TUNIS 002963

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/MAG (HARRIS) AND EB/IPE
STATE PASS USTR (BELL), USPTO (ADLIN AND ADAMS), USAID
(MCCLOUD)
USDOC FOR ITA/MAC/ONE (NATHAN MASON), ADVOCACY CTR (JAMES),
AND CLDP (TEJTEL)
CASABLANCA FOR FCS (ORTIZ)
LONDON AND PARIS FOR NEA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [KIPR](#) [TS](#)
SUBJECT: COMMERCE MINISTRY TALKS TOUGH ON IPR

REF: TUNIS 2771

¶1. (SBU) Leila Fethi, in charge of implementing programs in the Economic Control Division (ECD) in the Tunisian Ministry of Commerce and Handicrafts, discussed with EconOff the recent removal of pirated optical disks from retail giant Carrefour and upcoming GOT actions on the intellectual property front. When asked whether Carrefour's decision to stop its sale of pirated optical disks (reftel) was in response to any particular GOT action, Fethi explained that the Ministry of Commerce had sent warning letters to Carrefour and other major retailers. The letters delineated the laws being violated by each retailer and asked them to cease the sale of pirated goods. Thus far, said Fethi, Carrefour is the only major retailer to abandon the sale of pirated goods. Several other major retailers, such as Geant and Monoprix, have continued to stock pirated DVDs and CDs. Fethi stated that if Geant and Monoprix fail to cease sales on their own, the GOT will take the step of seizing the counterfeit products and destroying them. When asked how much time remained for Geant and Monoprix to comply, Fethi indicated that the Ministry could be ready to take action as soon as January 2.

¶2. (SBU) In addition, Fethi emphasized that IPR violations that impact health and safety are ECD's top priority, but that the division also considered the volume of goods involved. Fethi also discussed an upcoming, but still unscheduled, GOT informational program on intellectual property rights. She stated that the GOT was planning an informational fair that would travel the country to highlight both the short-term and long-term economic costs as well as the potential health and safety consequences of using counterfeit products.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: The indication that the Ministry of Commerce anticipates taking action against the offending retailers is welcome, though it remains to be seen whether other players in the public and private sector will support such a high profile action. Post will continue to encourage tough GOT measures to protect intellectual property. End

Comment.
BALLARD